

KENTUCKY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

STAFF NOTE

Review Item:

Kentucky School for the Blind and Kentucky School for the Deaf Update

Applicable Statute or Regulation:

KRS 167.015

History/Background:

Existing Policy. Over the past few years, the Kentucky Board of Education (KBE) has focused extensive attention on services for students who are deaf/hard of hearing and blind/visually impaired throughout Kentucky. Special attention has been devoted to the operation of programs at the Kentucky School for the Blind and Kentucky School for the Deaf.

In August 2004, the KBE approved a five-year implementation plan for providing educational services at KSB and KSD and to support school districts serving students who are blind/visually impaired or deaf/hard of hearing. In addition to this implementation plan, each school has had a Facilities Planning Committee that has developed a facilities plan that was adopted by the KBE in order to provide the environment and structures necessary to support quality instruction and services for these students.

Since the development of these plans, many activities have been started or completed. The KBE will be given an update by staff on the activities of the center-based program, outreach services, the strengthened relationship with the Kentucky Deaf/Blind Project and the implementation of the facilities plan at each school. Some of the topics that will be addressed by the Instructional Leaders at each school are a new, innovative instructional management approach that includes individual student mentoring at KSB, revision of the professional development plan to focus on prioritized needs at KSD, addition of a certified teacher in the residential life program at KSD to extend student learning beyond the traditional school day as well as the forming of a committee of the SBDM Council to improve differentiated instructional strategies. The highly skilled educator assigned to the two schools will also report on the instructional initiatives that she is helping to implement.

Examples of the topics to be presented on outreach services are assignment and reassignment of staff at both schools to ensure that each special education cooperative area will have a designated consultant; both schools' outreach directors and the director of the Kentucky Deaf/Blind Project have worked with KDE staff to establish a technical assistance, management and accountability system. Professional development has been planned for all consultants to receive training on effective consultation, outcome-based technical assistance and cooperative relationships with school districts. Additionally, information will be shared on the expansion of each school's family support

centers and the installation of a new software program to enable the KSB Materials Center to respond more efficiently to requests for textbooks and materials across the state.

Some of the topics that will illustrate the strengthened relationship with the Kentucky Deaf/Blind Project are involvement in the establishment of the technical assistance, management, and accountability system, using Project to analyze the needs and services of students at each school who have complex impairments, and the opening of a satellite office at KSD.

Staff will explain the status of the facilities plan to include an update on the hiring of an architectural firm to begin the design and planning process at KSD and the status of the security systems at each school.

In order to provide a continuum of services to all students who are deaf/hard of hearing or blind/visually impaired, the center-based program at each school must continue to meet the needs of its students, the outreach services of each school must be able to support the students across the state, the facilities at each school must be able to support the programs, and KDE must continue to work closely with the Kentucky Deaf/Blind Project.

Impact on Getting to Proficiency:

Traditionally, there have been significant achievement gaps in test scores and success rates of students who are Deaf/Hard of Hearing and/or Blind/Visually Impaired. Program modifications at KSB and KSD are occurring and will continue to occur that will address achievement gap issues.

Contact Person:

Johnnie Grissom, Associate Commissioner
Office of Special Instructional Services
502/564-4970
Johnnie.Grissom@education.ky.gov

Deputy Commissioner

Commissioner of Education

Date:

February 2006